ERIC Document Resume	See Instruction Sheet	DATE OF RESUME 11/2	DATE RECEIVED

A. PUBLICATION DATA

1. ERIC NUMBER	2. ORIGINATOR CONTROL NO(S).	3. IDENTIFICATION NO.
ED002552	N.A.	N.A.

DO NOT WRITE IN SPACE BELOW

4. AUTHOR(S): N.A.

5. TITLE OF DOCUMENT ABSTRACTED: Identification of School Dropouts

6. PUBLICATION TITLE: N.A.

7. EDITOR(S): N.A.

8. PLACE OF ORIGIN Southern Illinois University
ORG. Quincy Public School Office of Education
CITY, STATE Wash., D.C.
TELE. EXT.
INST/LOC CODE

9. PUBLISHER OR SOURCE Southern Illinois University, Quincy Public School, Office of Education, Washington, D.C.

10. VOL.	11. PAGES	12. MO./YR.	13. TOTAL PP.
N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	3

MICROFILM COPY AVAILABLE: YES ☒ NO ☐

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TYPE OF REPORT
PROPOSAL ☐
IN-PROGRESS ☒
FINAL ☐
FOLLOW-UP ☐

OTHER ERIC REFERENCES:

ERIC SATELLITE CODE

B. INDEXING DATA

14. SUBJECT AREA

15. TYPE OF ENDEAVOR: Report

16. INDEXING TERMS (8-12)

intelligence test scores	academic achievement	social adjustment	
curriculum development	dropout identifiers	achievement	
socioeconomic status	reading achievement	identification	
	school adjustment	dropouts	

17. ABSTRACT (MAX. 250 WORDS)

Factors used to identify potential dropouts among incoming seventh graders are presented. These include socioeconomic status determined from the occupation of the father and the area of residence, intelligence test scores obtained from cumulative records, school achievement averaged from fifth and sixth grade marks, reading achievement based on sixth grade reading grade placement, and school and social adjustment determined from scores on a rating sheet grading aggressive and withdrawal tendencies.

Results from the above factors are tallied on a roster worksheet and totals of factor scores are made. In each of these factors, the "1" score is desirable and the "5" score is critical. A distribution of these scores are made with consideration given to missing scores. Cutoff points are established for first, second and third priority dropout-prone students. Cases of retardation and over-age are given consideration in the placement of a student in either first or second priority dropout-prone categories. Such subjective information as teacher comments on confidential information blanks is also considered in cases where the point score is on the borderline. The percentages of seventh grade students identified in each category are listed.

ERIC No.

18. SOURCE OF ABSTRACT

C. FUNDING DATA

19. SUPPORTING ORGANIZATION	20. DIVISION OR DEPT.	21. CONTRACT NO. / PROJECT NO.
	22. TOTAL COST OF PROJECT	
	23. DURATION OF PROJECT	U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare Office of Education

ERIC Form 1

ED002552

IDENTIFICATION OF SCHOOL DROPOUTS

AN ABSTRACT

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION AND WELFARE
Office of Education

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Curriculum Demonstration Program

Southern Illinois University

In Cooperation with: Quincy Public Schools

and U. S. Offices of Education

AJ 0522

ED002552

Identification Procedure:

The following factors critical to dropout-proneness are determined for each member of the incoming seventh grade.

1. Socioeconomic Status - From each sixth grade pupil a student information blank is obtained during the month of May. This provides information concerning the father's or breadwinner's occupation in the family and then classified from one to seven according to Warner's Revised Scale for rating occupations. The area of residence is also obtained from the student information blank and is classified according to a block-by-block coded city map which has been rated from one to seven, according to Warner's Index of Socioeconomic Characteristics. The two rating scores (occupation and residence) are totaled, a distribution of total scores is made separately for boys and girls, and quintile factor scores are assigned.

2. Intelligence - Intelligence test scores are obtained from the cumulative records; these consist primarily of the California Test of Mental Maturity given to sixth grade students. Separate distributions are made for boys and girls and quintile factors scores are assigned.

3. School Achievement - A two year average of fifth and sixth grade marks in arithmetic, language, social studies, and spelling are computed for all boys and girls. Factor scores are assigned to grade averages as follows: A=1; B=2; C=3; D=4; E=5. Cases of retardation and over-age are indicated next to the factor score and are considered in the final evaluation.

4. Reading Achievement - Sixth grade reading grade placement scores are used as a critical factor. Separate distributions are made for boys and girls and quintile factor scores are assigned. In addition, the increase in reading competence from Grade four through six is considered. Where either the fourth or sixth grade scores are unobtainable, this reading increase factor score is ignored in the final conclusion.

5. School and Social Adjustment - A pupil adjustment rating sheet is filled out by teachers for all students at the end of the sixth grade. This rating sheet is a modification of the "Behavior Description Chart" developed by the Quincy Youth Development Project and yields scores on (a) aggressiveness and (b) Withdrawnness. A distribution is made of these scores, and factor scores from one to five are assigned for each tendency. Boys and girls are handled separately.

Results of all the above steps are tallied on a roster worksheet and totals of factor scores made. In each of these factors, the "1" score is considered desirable and the "5" score as crit-

ical. A distribution of these scores was made with consideration given to missing scores. Cut-off points were established for first, second, and third priority dropout-prone students.

These six factors are: Intelligence, sixth grade reading achievement, socioeconomic level, fifth and sixth grade academic achievement, and aggressive and withdrawn tendencies. Cut-off points for the first, second, and third priorities are established. Cases of retardation and over-age are given heavy consideration in the placement of a student in either first or second priority dropout-prone categories. Subjective information such as comments from the sixth grade teacher that is submitted for each child on confidential information blanks is also considered in cases where the point score is on the borderline. The percentage of all seventh grade students identified in the three dropout categories for each year of the study follows:

Dropout Priority	1960	Percent 1961	1962
1st	19.7	21.3	22.4
2nd	14.3	12.7	12.5
3rd	8.2	8.4	7.6
Total	42.2%	42.4	42.5

Further information about the project or instrument used may be obtained by writing Edward Griffin, Project Director, Curriculum Demonstration Program, 1200 Maine, Quincy, Illinois.